

ARGUMENTS/REMARKS

Applicants would like to thank the examiner for the careful consideration given the present application. The application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office action, and amended as necessary to more clearly and particularly describe and claim the subject matter which applicants regard as the invention.

Claims 1-80 remain in this application.

The examiner objected to a number of claims for informalities. Those claims have been amended to correct the informalities, making the objections moot.

Claims 5-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. For the following reasons, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 3 has been amended to correct the confusing use of the term "nonuniformly thickening step", making the rejection moot.

However, applicants do not understand the Examiner's question of "what is the normalized adjusted normal means in claim 7?" The claim does not recite any "normalized adjusted normal means". Furthermore, the normalized adjusted normal operation of claim 7 is further defined in the claim (see lines 5-8), and is even further discussed on page 14 of the specification, for example, sufficient for one skilled in the art to practice the invention. If the Examiner intends to maintain this rejection, applicant requests a clarification from the Examiner.

Finally, applicants' representative notes that the Examiner must withdraw the provisional double patenting rejection if copending application 10/162,434 has not matured into a patent by the time this case is allowable.

In consideration of the foregoing analysis, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

Appl. No. 09/xxx
Amdt. Dated June 23, 2005
Reply to Office action dated February 23, 2003

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. 35924.

Respectfully submitted,

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